

Jerry Biffig

Parents FLAG Edmonton

Newsletter

September 1993

Next meeting will be: Tuesday September 21, 1993 @ 7:30 pm

For more information phone Lynne at [REDACTED]

Welcome Back

Welcome back to another year with P-FLAG, hope that everyone had a fantastic summer.

Entertainment

Lynn Labner, a comedian, singer, and entertainer will be appearing at the Garneau theatre on September 17 at 8:00 pm. Lynn has performed at several P-FLAG conventions and participated at the National March in Washington. Opening acts include performances by: the Dance Theatre of Canada and Triphoria. Those interested in the event can purchase tickets in advance at Boys Town for \$8 or \$10 at the door.

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Call Carol at 456-5928 for more information.

Guest Speaker

Murray Billett will be speaking on being a father and gay husband at our October 19 meeting. This meeting may provide some insight into including spouses of gays into the P-FLAG mandate.

Letter to the Editor

Many thanks to Joan and Izydore from all of us who attended the wind-up B-B-Q in their lovely garden. A great time was had by about 19 members and guests (including a 3 week old baby). We even celebrated Lynne's (How many?) birthday. Thanks for being such gracious hosts. It was great fun.

Cindy

Pride Day Picnic Report-

The final tally of profits was \$153 from the sale of hot dogs and pop plus \$59.50 from sale of pop at cost. We owe the Gay Pride Committee 5% of profits as seed money for next years celebration. In connection with Gay Pride Day Lynne and Cindy attended a meeting at City Hall recently. Alderman Michael Phair chaired the meeting at which Mayor Reimer filled us in on the not so pleasant feed back she had received after proclaiming Gay Pride Day. There was much discussion about how we could better prepare the Mayors office before next year. It was concluded that it is "our" (the Gay community) job to start educating NOW. I feel we as parents are in a wonderful position to do this as generally people do not attack the parents - only the gays and lesbians. We can do this very quietly on a one to one basis (no soap boxes need be used) for those of us who are shy or "not so out". Think about how you can make a difference.

In July Cindy attended a meeting of the Gay Community with the Police Liaison Committee. At a later date we hope to have a report from Sgt. Joe Rodgers regarding the progress of this group. The police department was commended for their presence at the Gay Pride Parade.

Would you have walked with her?

(Taken from the July/August Vancouver PFLAG newsletter)

When Jeanne Manford walked in the Gay Pride March of June, 1972, she was the first parent to come out openly in support of her gay son. And come out she did, this photo [not available for reproduction] appeared in the New York Times the following day.

During a gay rights demonstration Jeanne's son Morty had been beaten and pushed down a staircase as city policemen stood by. A local station televised the beating and Jeanne began writing letters and appearing on talk shows and Morty suggested that Jeanne march with him in the June 1972 parade. She agreed, on the condition that he make a sign for her to carry: "Parents of Gays: Unite in support of our Children."

The response was overwhelming. For several blocks, however, Jeanne thought the roars of approval were intended for Dr. Benjamin Spock, the famed baby doctor who happened to be marching just behind the Manfords. She soon realized otherwise.

"The young people were hugging me, kissing me, screaming, asking if I would talk to their parents," she recalled. "So many wanted me to call their parents that I realized we just had to form a group."

The establishment of P-FLAG was and is, a response born of the bystanders' blend of feelings; gratitude for the symbolic parental presence and profound longing for the acceptance of their own absent fathers and mothers.

Jeanne Manford was with Morty when he died a little more than a year ago of AIDS, almost 20 years to the day after she wrote her unconditional love on poster paper for all the world to see. She does not reproach herself. She loved and accepted her child the way he was. In a perfect world, this would be the definition of "parent" in the dictionary. The point is not what you'll tell your friends at the bridge table. It is what you'll tell yourself at the end.

Membership Applications

Membership applications are once again being mailed out for the new year. Many of us did not receive any information or newsletters from P-FLAG headquarters last year and thus feel somewhat cheated. Since part of our dues go to P-FLAG headquarters, Cindy will be inquiring into a reimbursement from them.

Please note the change in the membership fee for this year. The membership for receiving news letters only will be \$10, this includes the cost of mailing. To receive information from P-FLAG federation, the membership must be received in full.

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